

**O**n a beautiful Idaho bluebird morning in mid-summer, a young angler picks up her fishing pole and makes a perfect cast into a glassy pool. She watches her fly for a strike as a cloud of mayflies hover over the river surface. Suddenly, a native cutthroat leaps out of the water and takes her fly on the way down. Excitedly, she sets the hook and the fight is on. “Daddy, I’ve got one!”

Ah, the allure of catching a prized fish gets many Idaho residents charged up for fishing adventure. Yet, there are so many places to go, so many options to ponder. This Official Guide to Fishing in Idaho is designed to provide all anglers concise information on where to go fishing for 42 species of gamefish in all corners of Idaho, what species you’ll find in particular rivers, lakes and reservoirs, and what public facilities are available.

Our fair state is an angler’s dream because we have an abundance of fishing opportunities on 26,000 miles of streams, 2,000 natural lakes and nearly 239,000 acres of reservoirs. A bounty of public lands in Idaho, combined with a wide range of recreation facilities ensure that public access is guaranteed to many high-quality fishing waters for everyone.

In this guide, the state is broken down into eight sections. Using the map and information charts together will help you find waters to match your fishing preferences. In general, lakes, ponds and reservoirs are open for fishing all year, 24-hours a day. Rivers and streams are typically open from the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend through November 30. However, many waters have different rules and seasons, so be sure to pick up a free fishing rules brochure to check on season dates, special regulations and bag limits. The brochures are available at all Idaho Department of Fish and Game offices and most sporting goods stores statewide.

Before you venture out to go fishing, be sure to purchase or renew your fishing license. Anyone 14 years old or older must have a valid license to fish in Idaho. Nonresident children under 14 may fish without a license if accompanied by a license-holding adult. Licenses can be purchased at any local license vendors and all IDFG offices. For credit card purchases, you can call 1-800-554-8685 or 1-800-824-3729, or log onto [www.greatlodges.com/id](http://www.greatlodges.com/id).

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*This publication will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Department of Fish and Game for assistance.*

# Some Basics about Fishing in Idaho

## Basic Equipment

Fishing equipment ranges from the simple and basic to the highly technical and expensive. One only needs to go to a tackle shop to see the grand array of what's available. For the beginner, it can be mind boggling, for the more experienced it can be heaven. Most of us are somewhere in the middle. If you are a beginner, here's a few tips to help you get set up.

A moderately priced 5' - 5 1/2' medium-weight rod with a matching reel will serve for most kinds of fishing and provide you with years of fishing enjoyment. Add to that some 4 - 8 pound monofilament line, some hooks, sinkers, small bobbers, bait and you're ready to go. Here's how to put it together.

## Trespass Law

No person may enter private land to hunt, fish or trap without permission if the land is either cultivated or posted with legible "No Trespassing" signs. Proper posting means either signs, 100 square inches of fluorescent orange paint or an entire fluorescent orange metal fence post every 660 feet around the property and at reasonable access points.

It is unlawful for anyone to post public land that is not held under an exclusive control lease. Conviction of trespass on posted private property carries a **mandatory one-year revocation** of hunting/fishing/trapping licenses.

### ASK FIRST!

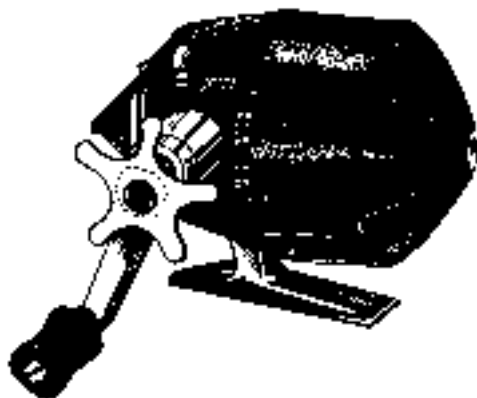
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*Be courteous, and respect landowners and their private property rights - **do not***

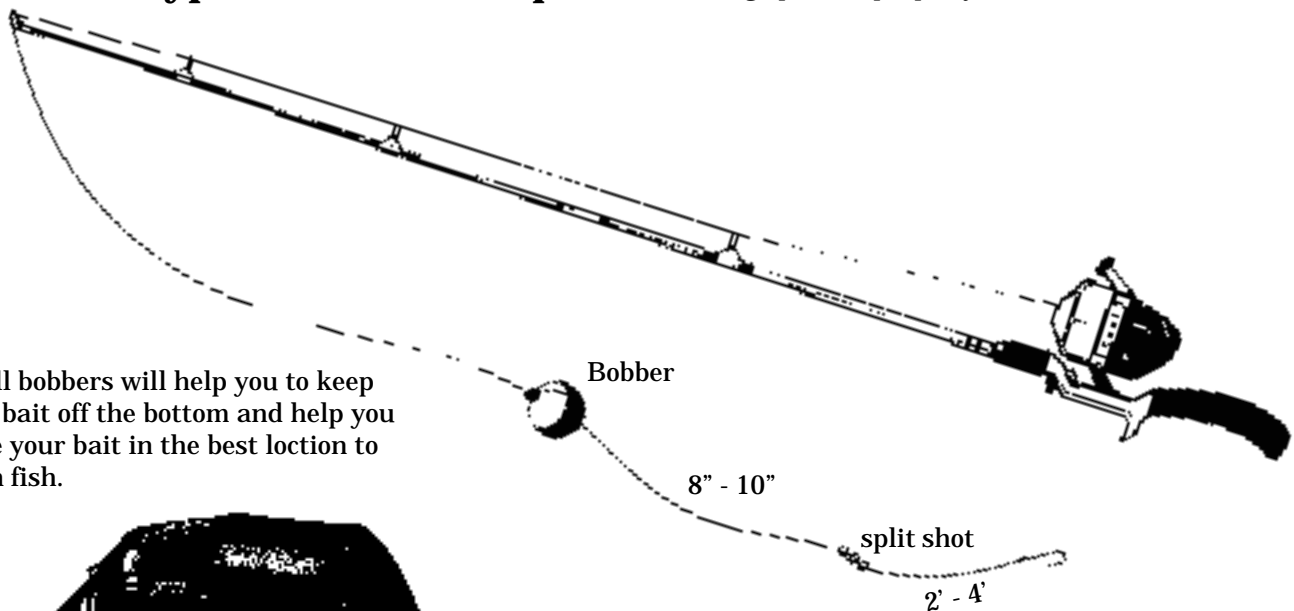
- trespass
- leave behind trash
- harass livestock
- damage private property.

## Typical Bobber Setup

Small bobbers will help you to keep your bait off the bottom and help you place your bait in the best location to catch fish.



Closed-faced spinning reels are the easiest to use when learning casting techniques.



## Family Fishing Waters Identify Hot Spots for Family Fun

It's always nice to know a few choice spots close to home where you can take your family and kids fishing, and have a fairly high likelihood that you'll catch fish.

That was the idea behind the creation of the Family Fishing Waters program by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in 2001. In each region of the state, IDFG officials identified a number of ponds, lakes, reservoirs and rivers that have easy access, rest room facilities, and plenty of fish to catch.

Many Family Fishing Waters also have year-round seasons, six-fish limits for trout, bass, walleye and pike, and no length limits or gear restrictions.

In short, Family Fishing Waters are geared toward families, young anglers and others who may be wetting a line for the first time.

In the Southwest region of Idaho, for example, Fish and Game has designated 18 fishing destinations as Family Fishing Waters. These include areas such as the Park Center Pond in Boise, the Boise River, Idaho City Pond, Marsing Pond and Bull Trout Lake.

Each IDFG regional office has a special pamphlet on Family Fishing Waters, which identify the waters identified for families and kids in that region.

The pamphlets feature full-color illustrations and text to help anglers identify Idaho's game fish species. These pages also tell where each species is generally found, whether it is native or introduced, and warns where no harvest is allowed.

In addition, the pamphlets provide tips on what equipment to use, where to fish for various species, how to vary the kinds of lure or bait to increase your likelihood of success, how to care for fish if you're planning on keeping them for a meal and how to properly release fish back into the water without injury.

For more information on Family Fishing Waters, ask for a pamphlet at the nearest IDFG regional office, or check the IDFG web site, <http://www2.state.id.us/fishgame>.

## Fishing Ethics

It's important for all anglers to remember a few basic courtesy issues when going fishing. By paying attention to these issues, anglers can improve the experience of others who follow them to the same fishing hole.

**Litter.** Be sure to pick up after yourself and follow the mantra of "leave no trace" when you go fishing. It is illegal to litter in Idaho, but far too many anglers leave worm containers, excess fishing line and other items on lakeshores and riverbanks, spoiling the experience for those who follow and causing damage to the environment. Discarded fishing line can trap waterfowl or small mammals. Six-pack plastic loops can harm wildlife. Unwanted fish carcasses or innards thrown aside on shore draw flies and foul the air. Try to leave a fishing site cleaner than you found it.

**Elbow room.** It's an unwritten rule that anglers should not infringe on the space of another angler. Be sure to leave enough space between your fishing spot and another angler to ensure that you don't hook their line and cause conflicts. This is a basic courtesy that should be observed on all streams, rivers, lakes and reservoirs.

**Ramp etiquette.** Popular boat ramps can become crowded quickly on weekends, and the potential for conflicts can occur. In general, boat ramps should be used on a first-come, first-served basis. When the ramp is crowded, do your best to launch your boat quickly and move your vehicle to open space for the next group. If you have a boat that needs to be inflated before launching, try to find a place off to the side of the boat ramp so you don't block the ramp while others are waiting.

**Ask First! to fish on private lands.** Private landowners are increasingly posting their lands "no trespassing" because other hunters or anglers have forgotten to close gates, strewn garbage around or failed to ask permission to use private property. Always ask first before fishing on private land, and be sure to follow any guidelines prescribed by landowners. If you Ask First!, and show that you're an ethical angler, you and others will be welcome back again.

